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THE VISION SPLENDID

VERSE FOR THE TIMES
AND THE TIMES TO COME

THE VISION SPLENDID

BY
JOHN OXENHAM

AUTHOR OF "ALL'S WELL!"
"BEES IN AMBER," ETC.



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FOREWORD

Is the outcome of this latest world tragedy to be loss or gain? Under God, it rests with ourselves.

The greatest world tragedy of all ended on the Cross in what, to the men of those days, seemed absolute loss; but that apparent loss has become life's greatest gain.

So far, the world's loss in material things in this war does not bear brooding upon. But even therein the apparent loss is not all loss. Our men, we know, are not lost, except for a brief space to us who are left. To themselves, the gain of their translation is good to think upon. The minor loss, in treasure of all kinds, may prove gain if it bring us perforce to simpler living. And—the soul of the world has been shocked at last into true understanding of the inevitable and dire results of purely materialistic aims. It has seen the soul of a great nation deliberately self-poisoned at the fount by the worship of a false ideal. The one great loss to the world so far is the loss of the German soul. Time, and the will thereto, may repair even that.

FOREWORD

But, in certain directions, we are, most of us, conscious of some gain. The heroism of our men has been rivalled by the heroic endurance with which those at home have borne their losses. It is wonderful. It is magnificent.

Bruised and broken hearts are nearer and dearer to God than self-sufficient and self-satisfied ones. We have, most of us, felt ourselves, as never before, in the hands of God. And that is undoubted good. Amid all the horrors and confusions of these terrible times, the soul of life is groping back to the elementals and fundamentals as the only truly stable things left.

Much that we held essential has vanished in the fiery furnace. But, in the old story, it was in the fiery furnace that the Son of God was discovered walking with the captives;—and the bonds which had bound them had disappeared in the flames and they were free men. God grant that that analogy hold true, and that we come forth from this furnace of affliction freed of our bonds and walking visibly, like them, with the Son of God!

If that be ours, then the New Life after the war will be regulated on the broad basis of the best for each and all, and all the forces of reaction which strive against that will have to go. Right will rule.

FOREWORD

If this fierce flame free us from the ruinous wastage of drink,—from the cancer of immorality,—from the shame of our housing-systems both in town and country,—and bring about a fairer apportionment of the necessities of life,—a living wage to all workers, leisure to enjoy, and opportunities to possess and progress,—it will have done much. If it level the dividing-walls, and result in a Pact of Nations which will ensure Peace for all time, it will have done very much. If it bring the world back to God, it will have done everything. This, our great sacrifice, will then be turned to everlasting gain.

The wheels of Life were skidding on the greasy ways of wealth and ease. We were leaving God out. This from which we are suffering is of our own incurring.

God's Law is Right,—right-doing,—Righteousness. Who breaks—pays, in this as in all other laws, but most inevitably in this. We broke,—in permitting amongst us and elsewhere, without protest, that which made for evil. We are paying. It is not punishment, but the simple righteous working of Inviolable Law.

And now,—having paid, in blood and tears and bitterness of woe,—now, with the spirit of God in

FOREWORD

us, with enlightened souls and widened hearts, we may look forward to The Vision Splendid of a new-made world.

Not only *may*,—we *must*. Every act is the fruit of a thought. If we do not think good we cannot act good. If we do not think deeply now on that to which we hope to attain we shall not be ready to act good when the time comes,—the attainment may be delayed and discounted.

So—to The Vision Splendid of a world in which God and Right shall reign supreme,—and may we all live to see it realized!

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THE VISION SPLENDID

The Vision of a world redeemed from sin,
Where Christ has first cast out then entered in,—
He died upon the Cross—for you and me,
And *you* have died to crown His Sovereignty.

.

For us He died,—
 For you and me;
For us they died,—
 For you and me.
That love so great be justified,
And that Thy Name be magnified,
 Grant, Lord, that we
 Full worthy be
Of these—our loved,—our crucified!

THE VISION SPLENDID

Here—or hereafter—you shall see it ended,
This mighty work to which your souls are set;
If from beyond—then, with the vision splendid,
You shall smile back and never know regret.

Be this your vision!—through you, Life trans-
figured,
Uplift, redeemed from its forlorn estate,
Purged of the stains which once its soul disfigured,
Healed and restored, and wholly consecrate.

Christ's own rich blood, for healing of the nations,
Poured through his heart the message of reprieve;
God's holy martyrs built on His foundations,
Built with their lives and died that Life might live.

Now, in their train, your blood shall bring like
healing;
You, like the Saints, have freely given your all,
And your high deaths, God's purposes revealing,
Sound through the earth His mighty Clarion Call.

Verse I. is from "Christ All" in "All's Well!"

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE VISION SPLENDID (continued)

O, not in vain has been your great endeavour;
For, by your dyings, Life is born again,
And greater love hath no man tokened ever,
Than with his life to purchase Life's high gain.

MORS JANUA VITÆ

Here, we have life,
Through your most valiant deaths out there;
There, you have life,
Through your most valiant deaths out there;
 For life so nobly given,—
 Thy strife so nobly striven,
 Grant them Thy heaven,—
New Life, O Lord,—Thy meet reward
For those most valiant deaths out there!

THE VICTORIOUS CROSS

The Cross still stands for Right
Against ungodly Might;
God's Love is that Eternal Light
 That shines for ever,
 Failing never,
 In the darkest night.

Though worlds in ruin lie,
Though man despairing die,
Though earth doth still Christ crucify,—
 The Cross stands ever,
 Failing never,
 Love to glorify.

Unchanged from what it meant
To that first penitent,—
Symbol of Love Omnipotent,—
 The Cross stands ever,
 Failing never,
 Of His Great Intent.

THE VICTORIOUS CROSS (continued)

God's Love to testify,
Man's faith to justify,
All life and death to dignify,—
 The Cross stands ever,
 Failing never,
 Of its sovereignty.

God's Love hung on The Tree;
Christ died—for you and me;
Christ rose again—for you—and me;—
 So—Love lives ever,
 Failing never,
 Through eternity.

THE VISION SPLENDID

JOINED UP

There is gathering in the heavens an innumerable
host
Of the valiant and the noble ones who count the
world well lost,
The Lord of Hosts had need of them for the work
He has on hand,
Now, like the stars for multitude, they wait His
high command.

Every race and every nation, every land beneath
the sun
Has helped to swell that great array, but all in
Him are one;
For the things that made for hatreds, and the
things that made for wrath,
Fell from them as they passed The Gate and
pledged their new God-troth.

He is ranging, He is sorting them, He is moulding
to His Will
Those wondrous divers elements so that each his
place may fill;

THE VISION SPLENDID

JOINED UP (continued)

The Lord of Life His Kingdom claims, His banner is unfurled,
He is marshalling His forces for the conquest of the world.

The Captain of that mighty host is robed in stainless white,
In His hand the Spear of Justice, and the sword of Truth and Right,
He wears as crown a platted thorn,—the kingliest crown e'er worn,
And blazoned on His banner is the glorious Cross of Scorn.

All the dear ones we have lost are in that host beyond compare,
He has called them to His battle that they may His Triumph share;
And no man there but glories in the gain we count but loss,—
For they proudly follow Him who vanquished Death upon the Cross.

THE VISION SPLENDID

JOINED UP (continued)

And the hearts of men are stirring now; they feel
His Presence near;
His clarion-call has thrilled the world with its
challenge loud and clear;
By the dim High Way of sorrow, and the clean
reluctant sword,
The Soul of Life is answering the summons of its
Lord.

THUS SAITH THE LORD!

THUS SAITH THE LORD—

Ye were become as dead dry bones

Wherein there was no life.

Yea, as the dead, and poorer than the dead,

In that ye lived yet had no life.

For Life that lives unto itself is Death,

And without ME nought IS.

Turn ye! Turn ye!

Turn ye now to ME again!

Cleanse you and make you clean!

Seek ye My face!

Walk in My ways!

Deal justly!

Walk uprightly!

Seek out the things that make for peace!

Live unto ME and no more to yourselves,

And I will come again and dwell with you,

And ye—shall—live!

Turn now to ME,

And I will breathe upon these dead dry bones

THE VISION SPLENDID

THUS SAITH THE LORD! (continued)

That they shall live.
Bone to his bone will I bring them,
With sinews afresh will I knit them,
With flesh and with skin will I clothe them,
And into them will breathe again
The Breath of Life,
That they shall live.
Turn ye! Turn ye!
Turn ye now to ME again,
And I will give to you New Soul of Life,
AND—YE—SHALL—LIVE!

Amen! Amen!
So be it with us, Lord!

ANGELS?—WHY NOT?

Were there angels at Mons?

Why not?

There are angels everywhere;

And we were fitter to receive

We might more possibly perceive

Them in the way.

Has He not charged them to upbear

Our stumbling footsteps, and with care

To help us when we stray?

Perchance, in that sore strain and stress,

Men's eyes were opened in the face

Of Death that they saw God,—and hidden
things,—

And visions of His angels' wings.

Why not?

God's arm still puissant is to smite;—

Why should it not, once more,

Have flamed, and struck like levin-light,

For Freedom, Justice, Truth, and Right,

As in the days of yore?

THE VISION SPLENDID

A NEW EARTH

God grant us wisdom in these coming days,
And eyes unsealed, that we clear visions see
Of that new world that He would have us build,
To Life's ennoblement and His high ministry.

God give us sense,—God-sense of Life's new
needs,
And souls aflame with new-born chivalries—
To cope with those black growths that foul the
ways,—
To cleanse our poisoned founts with God-born
energies.

To pledge our souls to nobler, loftier life,
To win the world to His fair sanctities,
To bind the nations in a Pact of Peace,
And free the Soul of Life for finer loyalties.

Not since Christ died upon His lonely cross
Has Time such prospect held of Life's new birth;
Not since the world of chaos first was born
Has man so clearly visaged hope of a new earth.

THE VISION SPLENDID

A NEW EARTH (continued)

Not of our own might can we hope to rise
Above the ruts and soilures of the past,
But, with His help who did the first earth build,
With hearts courageous we may fairer build this
last.

THE CHURCHES

Two, in the darkness, sought the Cross,
But in their blindness found it not;
This way and that, in dole and loss,
They sought the Cross but found it not.

"This way!"—the one insistent cried;
"Nay, this!"—the other quick replied;
And each the other's hope denied.

"I tell you, my way is the right!"
"Nay then, you stumbler in the night,
My way alone leads to the light!"

"Perverse!—Go then your own wrong road!"
"I go!—for my way leads to God."
And each his own way brusquely strode.

And up above, upon The Tree,
Christ's wounds broke in fresh agony.

THE VISION SPLENDID

WHAT DID YOU SEE OUT THERE, MY
LAD?

*What did you see out there, my lad,
That has set that look in your eyes?
You went out a boy, you have come back a man,
With strange new depths underneath your tan;
What was it you saw out there, my lad,
That set such deeps in your eyes?*

“Strange things,—and sad,—and wonderful,—
Things that I scarce can tell,—
I have been in the sweep of the Reaper’s
scythe,—
With God,—and Christ,—and hell.

“I have seen Christ doing Christly deeds;
I have seen the devil at play;
I have grimped to the sod in the hand of God;
I have seen the God-less pray.

“I have seen Death blast out suddenly
From a clear blue summer sky;
I have slain like Cain with a blazing brain;
I have heard the wounded cry.

THE VISION SPLENDID

WHAT DID YOU SEE OUT THERE, MY
LAD? (continued)

“I have lain alone among the dead,
With no hope but to die;
I have seen them killing the wounded ones;
I have seen them crucify.

‘I have seen the Devil in petticoats
Wiling the souls of men;
I have seen great sinners do great deeds
And turn to their sins again.

“I have sped through hells of fiery hail,
With fell red-fury shod;
I have heard the whisper of a voice;
I have looked in the face of God.”

*You've a right to your deep, high look, my lad,
You have met God in the ways;
And no man looks into His face
But he feels it all his days.
You've a right to your deep, high look, my lad,
And we thank Him for His grace.*

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, GREAT-
HEART?

*Where are you going, Great-Heart,
With your eager face and your fiery grace?—
Where are you going, Great-Heart?*

“To fight a fight with all my might,
For Truth and Justice, God and Right,
To grace all Life with His fair Light.”
Then God go with you, Great-Heart!

Where are you going, Great-Heart?
“To beard the Devil in his den;
To smite him with the strength of ten;
To set at large the souls of men.”
Then God go with you, Great-Heart!

Where are you going, Great-Heart?
“To end the rule of knavery;
To break the yoke of slavery;
To give the world delivery.”
Then God go with you, Great-Heart!

THE VISION SPLENDID

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, GREAT-HEART?

(continued)

Where are you going, Great-Heart?

“To hurl high-stationed evil down;
To set the Cross above the crown;
To spread abroad My King’s renown.”

Then God go with you, Great-Heart!

Where are you going, Great-Heart?

“To cleanse the earth of noisome things;
To draw from life its poison-stings;
To give free play to Freedom’s wings.”

Then God go with you, Great-Heart!

Where are you going, Great-Heart?

“To lift To-day above the Past;
To make To-morrow sure and fast;
To nail God’s colours to the mast.”

Then God go with you, Great-Heart!

Where are you going, Great-Heart?

“To break down old dividing-lines;
To carry out My Lord’s designs;
To build again His broken shrines.”

Then God go with you, Great-Heart!

THE VISION SPLENDID

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, GREAT-HEART?

(continued)

Where are you going, Great-Heart?

“To set all burdened peoples free;

To win for all God’s liberty;

To ’stablish His Sweet Sovereignty.”

God goeth with you, Great-Heart.

(After *Lamménais*.)

CARRY ON!

"Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!"—
Rings, like a clarion cry,
Our heart-felt valedictory,
To cheer you on to victory;—

"Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!"
Now bear you well, and bear you high,
Who fights for God to God draws nigh,
And wins him immortality;—

"Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!"

The night is past, day dawns at last;—

"Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!"

The way is clear, the goal is near;—

"Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!"

God's Best awaits beyond these straits;—

"Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!"

For Peace on Earth is at the birth;—

"Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!"

THE VISION SPLENDID

CARRY ON! (continued)

The fateful day is all your own,
The Evil Thing is overthrown,
The mighty victory is won;—

“Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!”
Your might shall set Christ on His Throne,
And His sweet grace in full atone
For all that you have undergone;—

“Carry on, Brave Hearts! Carry on!”

THE CROSS-ROADS

Together we lay in the trenches,
Together we held the foe,
Together we sped across No Man's Land
And laid the Alleman low.

And, now that the fighting is over,
Shall we take opposing roads?—
You to the joys of the Primrose Path,
We to the gall of the goads?

If so—there's a struggle before us,
And the end of it none can tell.
With you lies the mighty decision,—
Shall it be heaven 'or hell?

If we work as we did in the trenches,—
When no man's life was his own,
But each man strove for the good of all,
And worked till the work was done,—

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE CROSS-ROADS (continued)

We can make this Britain of ours
The happiest land on earth,
Where all men strive for the good of all,
And none shall suffer dearth.

We are here at the cross-roads—waiting;
We claim of our right fair-play;
Shall we work as we did in the trenches,
Or win by the rough red way?

THE CALL OF THE DEAD

*Do you hear a deep voice calling?—
Calling persistently?—
Like the sound of God's great waters,—
Calling insistently?
'Tis the voice of our dead, our myriad dead,
Calling to you and me;—*

“By the red deaths we have suffered,
By the fiery paths we trod,
By the lives we gave All Life to save,—
We call you back to God.

“We call you from your trifling
With the petty things of life;
We cry aloud for a new world vowed
To a world-redeeming strife.

“We call you to cut the cankers
That have grown around your growth;
We call you from by-ways to High Ways,
And the pledge of a new God-troth.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE CALL OF THE DEAD (continued)

“We call you to His high service;
You have followed other gods;
Their baneful ways brought the evil days,
And loosed the grim red floods.

“On your knees, on your knees, seek pardon
For the wrongs that have been done!—
For the perverse wills, and the active ills,
And the high things left undone!

“One way there is,—one only,
Whereby ye may stand sure;
One way by which ye may withstand
All foes, and Life’s High Ways command,
And make your building sure.—
Take God once more as Counsellor,
Work with Him, hand in hand,
Build surely, in His Grace and Power,
The nobler things that shall endure,
And, having done all,—STAND!”

JEWELS

Jewels of worth from Mother Earth
You may win and mightily prize,—
Emeralds, rubies, diamonds, all
Endowed with virtues symbolical,
And amethysts purpureal,
Opal, and turquoise, and sapphire blue,
Onyx, and beryl, and jacinth too,—
You may win them all and mightily prize,
But fairer to me are a baby's eyes,
Profound and sweet as the summer skies,
And litten still with the sanctities
Of the Love that lights up Paradise.

ON EAGLES' WINGS

(TO THE WHITE KNIGHTS OF THE AIR SERVICES.)

*Supremely in His Hand are you,
To whom the mighty joy is given
On eagles' wings to climb the blue,
And, on the pinions of the winds,
To sweep the boundless plains of heaven.
So—to your minds
Be present this,
For cheer in your necessities,—*

Who swings the countless spheres in space
Yet to their even courses holds;
Who set the firmament in place
And its infinitudes unfolds,—
Come what come may of hap or chance,
He is your sure deliverance.

If but as Pilot by your side
He sits, upon Whose breath you ride,

THE VISION SPLENDID

ON EAGLES' WINGS (continued)

He shall preserve you from alarms,
Spread wide His everlasting arms,
And bear you safely up on high
In His most noble company.

No sparrow falls but it is known
Of Him who sits on Heaven's high throne;
And you, in your supremest hour,
Shall feel the uplift of His power,
And know you not alone.

Alone? Alone?
None is alone!
For where is one,
There He is too.—
No man goeth alone!

Higher than most, to you is given
To live—or in His time, to die;
So, bear you as White Knights of Heaven—
The very flower of chivalry!
Take Him as Pilot by your side,
And "All is Well!" whate'er betide.

THE VISION SPLENDID

SEARCHLIGHTS

The searchlights sweep the sombre skies,—
Slow-wheeling,—focussed here and there,
To catch the lurking treacheries
Within their wide-flung whirling snare;
And when they find the hidden foe
The eager hunters lay him low.

God's mightier beams are searching out
The Soul of Life and lighting it,
That His fair hosts may put to rout
The foes that have been blighting it;
Sweep clean, O Lord, and beautify,
And come Thou in and occupy!

THE VISION SPLENDID

A LITTLE TE DEUM OF RENEWALS

For Thy sweet sunshine after nights of rain;
For Thy sweet balm of comfort after pain;
For Thy sweet peace that ends a long-drawn
 strife;
For Thy sweet rest that ends a burdened life;
For joy, dispersing sorrows as the sun
Sucks up the morning mists, and as Thy winds
Dispel the clouds and show the blue again,—
The deep, pure, tenuous, heavenly blue that seems,
In its infinity of tenderness,
Like to Thy Love, that fills all time and space
With Thy sweet Spirit's all-abounding grace;
For all Thy healing ministries,—
 We thank Thee, Lord.

For hearts estranged, won back to fellowship,
And closer knit by sweet forgivenesses;
For hearts made tenderer by fortune's blows;
For souls by sorrows ripened in Thy love;
Yea, and for pain that took our pride away,
And cast us wholly on Thy charity;
For darkened ways that led us to the Light,

THE VISION SPLENDID

A LITTLE TE DEUM OF RENEWALS (continued)

For blinding tears that yet renewed our sight;
For travails and perplexities of mind
Through which we wrestled, nobler life to find,—
And found, beyond our craving souls' upreach,
The wonder of the lessons Thou wouldst teach;
For dear lives salvaged from the hand of Death;
For pure souls' fiery purgings without scathe;
For answered prayers that showed Thy boundless
love;

For prayers unanswered, wiser love to prove;
For all Thy leadings through life's devious ways,
With faith illumined and high heart of grace;—

We thank Thee, Lord.

AFTER THE STORM

After the storm—Thy calm,—
After the earthquake, wind, and fire,—
The still, small voice,
Which yet doth pierce the marrow of our hearts
And makes our souls rejoice.

The whirlwind racked our Mounts of Selfish
Ease;—

Thy Hand was in it, but we did not see.

The earthquake shook our proud-built but-
tresses;—

Thy Hand was in it, but we could not see.

The fire devoured our bravest and our best;—

Thy Hand was in it, but we would not see.

But now . . . Thy ways are manifest,

And, dimly, Lord, we see.

Wrapped in the mantle of our sorrows, now
Before Thee in the cavern's mouth we stand;
Behind us,—all Thy mysteries of woe;
Before us,—visions of Thy Promised Land.

THE VISION SPLENDID

AFTER THE STORM (continued)

A land swept clean by earthquake, storm, and
fire,—

A land wherein Thy Spirit may rejoice,
Where Faith and Hope, with Love enthroned,
conspire

To build Thy Kingdom of the still, small voice.

That still, small voice that yet proclaims Thy will,
Above the thunders of the battle-plain,
That bids man his high destiny fulfil,
And rise, and reap in full Thy golden grain.

Thou hast made chaos of our old content,
Purged us with fire, and winnowed us with woe;
We were forgetting that Thy gifts are meant
Only to wean us from the things below.

Yea, we forgot that all life's joys are sent,
Not as an end, but of Thy favour lent
For our poor natures' sweet encouragement,
And for our souls' most high ennoblement.

Help us to purge us of those lower things,
Which, growing, brought this world-catastrophe!
Help us to build, of these our sufferings,
Temples of Grace all dedicate to Thee!

THE VALLEY OF DECISION

The World is in the Valley of Decision;
It is standing at the parting of the ways;
Will it climb the Steps of God to realms elysian,—
Or fall on horror of still darker days?

Will it free itself from every shameful shackle?
Will it claim the glorious freedom of the brave?
Will it lose the soul of Life in this debacle,
And sink into a mean dishonoured grave?

All the world is in the Valley of Decision,
And out of it there is but one sure road;
Eyes unsealed can still foresee the mighty vision
Of a world in travail turning unto God.

All the world is in the Valley of Decision.
Who shall dare its future destiny foretell?
Will it yield its soul unto the Heavenly Vision,
Or sink despairing into its own hell?

THE GOAL AND THE WAY

The future lies
With those whose eyes
Are wide to the necessities,
And wider still
With fervent will,
To all the possibilities.

Times big with fate
Our wills await,
If we be ripe to occupy;
If we be bold
To seize and hold
This new-born soul of liberty.

And every man
Not only can,
But *must* the great occasion seize.
Never again
Will he attain
Such wondrous opportunities.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE GOAL AND THE WAY (continued)

Be strong! Be true!
Claim your soul's due!
Let no man rob you of the prize!
The goal is near,
The way is clear,
Who falters now shames God, and dies.

THROUGH THE VALLEY

As I walk through the Valley of Shadows
No evil do I fear,
The Staff of Thy Love doth comfort me,
Thy Rod itself hath cheer;
For they guide me with care to the pastures fair
Where the living waters flow,
Where the shadows give place to the Sun of Thy
 grace
And Thy Passion-Flowers grow.

So I come through the Valley of Shadows;
It was very drear and dark,
For Death had been reaping his harvest there
And had left it bare and stark.
But the shadowy way climbs up to the day,
And I press on with heart elate,
For the end of my quest is the shining crest,
And a wide-flung Open Gate.

And One hath a sumptuous table spread,
Inside the Open Gate,
And there, with welcoming hands and face,

THE VISION SPLENDID

THROUGH THE VALLEY (continued)

My coming He doth wait.
And His greeting sweet doth my joy complete,
As He draws me in to rest,
For I know that the road I so wearily trod
Is the way His Love dreamed best.

And there, of His radiant company,
Full many a one I see,
Who has won through the Valley of Shadows
To the larger liberty.
Even there, in the grace of the heavenly place,
It is joy to meet mine own,
And to know that not one but has valiantly won
By the way of the Cross, his crown.

VISIONS

Thank God for Vision of the brighter day,
That dawns at last beyond this rough red way!
New life is there for those who dare,—
A life that all these sufferings shall repay;—

A life set free from all the grosser things
That warped our souls and bound the Spirit's
 wings,—
An entrance fair to larger air,
And certitude of nobler prosperings.

Only have vision and bold enterprise!
No task too great for men of unsealed eyes;
The Future stands with outstretched hands,
Press on and claim its high supremacies!

HIS LATCH-KEY

("I am sending you all my keys except the latch. That I will keep, so that some day, when I get leave, I may walk in on you unexpectedly and give you a surprise.")

—In a letter from the Front.)

And long . . . long . . . long we waited
For the sound that would tell he was here,
For the sound that would tell us our vigil was o'er,
And our hearts need be anxious no more,—
For that sweetest of sounds that could fall on the
ear
Of those who had lived on the knife-edge of
fear,—
The sound of his key in the door;—
The sound of all sounds that could bring back
life's cheer,
And comfort our hearts that were sore.
O the ears of our souls strained as never before,
For that sound of all sounds that our joy would
restore,—
The sound of his key in the door.

THE VISION SPLENDID

HIS LATCH-KEY (continued)

And we said, "We shall know when our boy's on
the way."

And we said, "We shall know when he's near.
His step we shall catch while it's still far away,
And with it an end to our fear."

"But," we said,—“we will wait for his key in the
door,

For the sound that shall tell us our waiting is
o'er,—

For the joy of its rattle, so gallant and gay,
As we've heard it so often of yore.

O yes, we shall know ere he reaches the door,
For his guardian angel will fly on before
To tell us he's on the way."

And so we waited, by night and by day,
For the sound that would all our long waiting
repay,—

For the sound of his key in the door.

But now,—

Well "All's Well!" but we're
waiting no more

For the sound of his key in the door.

It lies with him there in his lowly grave,

THE VISION SPLENDID

HIS LATCH-KEY (continued)

Out there at the Front, where his all he gave
Our lives and the Soul of Life to save,
And our hopeful vigil is o'er.
For now it is he who is waiting for us,
On the other side of The Door;
And Another stands with him there, waiting for
us,
And the sound of *our* key in That Door.

THE VISION SPLENDID

COMFORT YE!

I.

In that sweet after-life,
When time is done,
And loving hearts again are one
In perfect union,
You shall look back and say,—
“And did I mourn that he
Passed on in front of me
By just one day?
The time indeed seemed long to me,
And hushed my song in misery;
But, in the light of this eternity,
’Twas but a span,—just a short winter’s day,—
Soon past,
And by these present joys far overpassed.”

II.

I see their shining eyes,
Their glad and eager faces
Waiting to welcome us
To the heavenly places.

THE VISION SPLENDID

COMFORT YE! (continued)

And how shall we complain
Of our own loss and pain,
When unto them we know the change
Is all eternal gain?

III.

Ah—how we miss him—
Every hour of every day!
Life, since he went, has been a grey
Dull way, wherein we stray
Neighbour'd with grief, and blinded with dismay.

Never to see him more!—
To hear his voice!—to see his face again!
Lord, it is sore beyond our ken,—
How shall our hearts endure
Discomfiture so great and such vast forfeiture?

And yet, our faith dare not gainsay
Thy love in taking him away.
Such good is his, such perfect bliss,
How could we wish him back in this
Small world of grim perplexities?

THE VISION SPLENDID

COMFORT YE! (continued)

And, of a truth, at times he feels so near,—
Nearer in very deed
Than when we had him here,—
That we are comforted.
We cast despair and put away our fear.

We shall not see him here again;
To us he may not come;
But when at last we shall attain
The heavenly place, be his dear face
The first to greet us in Thy grace
And bid us "Welcome Home!"

THE VISION SPLENDID

SWEET LAVENDER

The pains of hell had gotten hold of him;
He longed for death.
Dim were his eyes, feeble his pulse, and grim
His laboured breath.

His nurses' hearts were wrung with woe for him,
So sore his plight;
His cup of anguish trembled to the brim
Without respite.

Sleep came not near to succour him. All day
He longed for night;
And through the dim night-watches still he lay
Craving the light.

"He cannot stand it long," they said. And yet
He did not die.
And each new thing they tried seemed but to whet
His agony.

THE VISION SPLENDID

SWEET LAVENDER (continued)

"Unless he sleeps, he dies." The sands
 ran low,
But nought availed
To check the on-come of the ruthless foe,—
Pain still prevailed.

Then one, in pity, on his pillow laid
A tiny bag
Of lavender, the simplest thing,—rough-made
Of silken rag.

Pale blue it was, like the Madonna's gown,—
Or English skies
In Springtime, when the sweet bright days en-
 throne
Life's ecstasies.

"What's that?"—the sufferer groaned, and sensed
 its sweet
With eagerness.
"Sweet lavender from home," and the
 word beat
Through his distress.

THE VISION SPLENDID

SWEET LAVENDER (continued)

Sweet "lavender from home! it
wafted him

Across the seas,—

He saw the path, the stile, the stream abrim,

The sunlit trees,—

Where he and one had wandered, heart to
heart,—

Wedded that day,—

With four days more before they two must part,—

He to the fray.

And she had pelted him with lavender's

Sweet budding sprays,

And like to heaven had been his love and hers

Those five full days.

He smiled, through all the torment of his pain,—

And then, he slept;

And all the ward, to salvage such great gain,

On tip-toe crept.

.
They know not whom to thank for that sweet
grace;—

Their hearts go out

THE VISION SPLENDID

SWEET LAVENDER (continued)

To you,—and you,—in gratitude, in case
'Twas your good thought.

That tiny silken bag they hold, you see,
Beyond all price,
For, under God, three lives it saved, maybe
For Paradise.

THE VISION SPLENDID

ATONEMENT

At one with Thee!—
Earth's cares are gone.
What matters else,
With Thee at one?

MOOR-MAIDEN

No sweeter maid e'er trod the moor,
No saint more fitly shrined;
She loves the little things of God,
And knows His larger mind;
She passes through the outer wards
And sees the things behind.

She is a Queen, of hearts and souls,
Her kingdom has no ends;
And when the troubled seek her help
Their wounds she gently tends.
And never a soul but she makes whole,
Because she comprehends.

There, from her amethystine throne,
She quietly surveys
The doings of the outer world,
And muses on its ways;
And when things get beyond her ken
She to her knees and prays.

THE VISION SPLENDID

MOOR-MAIDEN (continued)

And prayer with her is powerful,
And so doth much avail.
Before the Lord she pours her soul
In commune mystical;
And, since her life is given to Him
She with Him doth prevail.

SANCTUARY

'Mid all the traffic of the ways,—
Turmoils without, within,—
Make in my heart a quiet place,
And come and dwell therein!

—A little shrine of quietness,
All sacred to Thyself,
Where Thou shalt all my soul possess,
And I may find myself;

—A little shelter from Life's stress,
Where I may lay me prone,
And bare my soul in lowliness,
And know as I am known;

—A solitude where I can think,
A haven of retreat,
Where of Thy Red Wine I may drink,
And of Thy White Bread eat;

THE VISION SPLENDID

SANCTUARY (continued)

—A little silent sacred place,
Where we may commune hold;
Where Thy White Love shall me embrace
And from the world enfold;

—A little place of mystic grace,
Of self and sin swept bare,
Where I may look into Thy face,
And talk with Thee in prayer.

Come!—occupy my silent place,
And make Thy dwelling there!
More grace is wrought in quietness
Than any is aware.

THE VISION SPLENDID

IN THE MASTER'S GARDEN.

The Master walked in His garden,
Among the growing flowers,
And the drooping ones and the thirsty
He cheered with cooling showers!

And here and there He checked a growth
With His loving pruning-knife,
That the plant more graciously might grow,
And have a richer life.

And as He slowly passed along,
The beauty-growths He scanned,
And bent and plucked one, here and there,
And carried it in His hand.

And some, with wondrous tenderness,
To His lips He gently pressed,
And fervent blessings breathed on them,
And laid them in His breast.

THE VISION SPLENDID

IN THE MASTER'S GARDEN (continued)

Not a flower that the Master gathers
Ever closes or withers away,
But sweeter still and fairer grows
In the light of His full day.

GOD'S SUNSHINE

Never—once—since the world began
Has the sun ever once stopped shining.
His face very often we could not see,
And we grumbled at his inconstancy;
But the clouds were really to blame, not he,
For, behind them, he was shining.

And so—behind life's darkest clouds,
God's love is always shining.
We veil it at times with our faithless fears,
And darken our sight with our foolish tears,
But in time the atmosphere always clears,
For His love is always shining.

LOVE EVER GIVES

Love ever gives,—
Forgives—outlives,—
And ever stands
With open hands.
And, while it lives,
It gives.
For this is Love's prerogative,—
To give,—and give,—and give.

LITTLE BROWN SISTER

O sweet sweet sweet,
Little soul of musical fire!—
Sweet-sweet-sweet sweet sweet
 sweet sweet.
Little passion of pure white fire!—
Sweet-sweet-sweet sweet-sweet-sweet
 sweet sweet
Little spirit of silvery fire,
All athrob with high desire,
Ever higher, higher, higher,
To the gates of heaven aspire,
Heart and wings that never tire,
Throat of rippling silvery fire,—
Sweet-sweet-sweet sweet sweet
 sweet sweet!
How they all in you conspire
To lift you higher, higher,
Ever nigher, nigher, nigher,
To the heart of your desire!
Sweet-sweet-sweet sweet sweet
 sweet sweet.
Little soul of silvery fire,

THE VISION SPLENDID

LITTLE BROWN SISTER (continued)

In yourself a perfect choir,

A heavenly choir entire,—

Of sweetest, purest, rarest, fairest,

White-hot high desire!

O sweet sweet sweet-sweet-sweet

 sweet sweet

Little soul of magical fire!

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER

Jim Baxter was the coarsest clay
That ever was turned out;
But a very first-class fighting-man,
Of that there was no doubt.

He'd fought since ever he could crawl,
And generally won;
Because he never could be brought
To see that he was done.

So when the war came, Jim was off,—
Among the first to go,
Though what the scrap was all about
He didn't rightly know.

He simply couldn't miss it when
There was fighting to be done.
Duty, he told the wife and kids,
Was a thing no man could shun;

This is simply a name of my own choosing. If perchance there should be an actual Jim Baxter who might feel aggrieved by this use of his name, I take this opportunity of stating that nothing herein in any way refers to him.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER (continued)

And, besides, he had a hankering
To see the blooming fun.

And he might have been a corporal—
Or at all events a lance,—
If he hadn't been, week out, week in,—
For ever on the prance.

And he might have been a sergeant,
If he hadn't played the goat;
For Jim was a first-class fighting-man,
Of that there was no doubt.

And he might have been a Q.-M.-S.,
If he hadn't been a fool;
But, though a first-class fighting-man,
He had been no good at school.

He drank enough for ten good men,
He swore till all was blue;
And non.-coms. *never* drink or swear,
Or do what they shouldn't do.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER (continued)

So Jim remained a private,—
When he wasn't in the jug;
And hated sergeants, large and small,
And didn't care a plug.

He liked the padre just as much,
And heeded not his talk;
And when the good man tackled him,
He always tried to balk.

Then came the day, when, blithe and gay,
They smashed the German line,
And Jim was first man in the trench,
Fighting like any nine.

They held it for an hour or more,
While their supports in rear,
Instead of coming, lost their way,
And threw things out of gear.

And then the huns came swarming back,
And word was given to quit;
But Jim was fighting as he drank
And paid no heed to it.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER (continued)

Their cartridges had given out,
Supplies had gone astray;
'Twas time to go if they would live
To fight another day.

“Blank—blanketty—blank!” the Sergeant
 roared,—
“Back lads!—They’re ten to one!”
Then something took him in the chest,—
“Back lads!” he groaned, “I’m done.”

But Jim was not the kind to leave
A comrade in distress,
Although he was the awkwardest
Of all the Sergeants’ mess.

So Jim, he straddled over him
And kept the huns at bay,
And, with both butt and bayonet,
Made wonderful fine play.

He fought like ten big fighting-men,
But huns have no respect
For valour in an enemy,
They deem it incorrect.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER (continued)

So Jim went down plugged full of holes;
But he was hard to kill,
And, while he lay unconscious, they
Worked out their evil will.

When Jim came to, he found himself
Nailed to a cross of wood,
Just like the Christs you find out there
On every country road.

He wondered dully if he'd died,
And so become a Christ;
"Perhaps," he thought, "all men are Christs
When they are crucified."

His strength was ebbing with his blood,
His hands and feet were dead,
Fierce biting pains shot from the nails
And blazed within his head.

Below, a mob of jeering huns
Mocked at his woful plight,
They bade him loose himself, and come
Down for another fight.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER (continued)

"Christ!"—groaned Jim Baxter, through his
teeth,
And meant no ill thereby;—
It was his usual expletive
And came most readily.

"Christ!"—groaned Jim Baxter, through his
teeth,
"D'you call . . . this . . . fighting fair?
Just loose me hands . . . and loose me feet . . .
An' I'd lick you still . . . I swear.

"Christ!"—groaned Jim Baxter, through his
teeth,
As the pangs took hold of him,—
"I'm going quick . . . a dirty trick . . ."
His eyes were growing dim.

But, suddenly, he raised his head,
His eyes shone clear and bright,
And opened wide . . . for, at his side,
Stood One clothed all in white.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER (continued)

The sun broke through the morning mist
And bathed them in its light,—
Jim Baxter nailed upon his cross,
And The Other all in white.

His face was wondrous pitiful,
But still more wondrous sweet;
And Jim saw holes just like his own
In His white hands and feet;
But His look it was that won Jim's heart,
It was so wondrous sweet.

"Christ!"—said the dying man once more,
With accent reverent,
He had never said it so before,
But he knew now what Christ meant;—

"Christ" meant a friend in time of need,
In spite of foes,—a friend indeed;
That was quite evident,—
A friend who drew his heart right out,
And for his soul did plead.
Jim gave in full, heart, mind and soul,
In deep acknowledgment.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE BALLAD OF JIM BAXTER (continued)

And then, through all his deadly pains,
He bravely smiled and sighed,—
Just one long sigh of deep content,
Then dropped his head and died.

His comrades took the trench next day,
And found him nailed up there,
With a smile of grace upon his face,
But never a sign of care.

And there, on his cross, they buried him,
Against a Judgment Day;
Not That Great Day,—but a nearer one,
That draweth on as the war is won,
When, for the evil they have done,
The doers of ill shall pay.

THE OUTER GUARD

Bold Watchers of the deeps,
Guards of the Greater Ways,
How shall our swelling hearts express
Our heights and depths of thankfulness
For these safe-guarded days!

Grim is your vigil there,
Black day and blacker night,—
Watching for life, while knavish death
Lurks all around, above, beneath,
Waiting his chance to smite.

Your hearts are stouter than
The worst that Death can do.
Our thoughts for you!—our prayers for you!
There's One aloft that cares for you,
And He will see you through.

Don't think we e'er forget
The debt we owe to you!
Never a night but we pray for you!
Never a day but we say for you,—

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE OUTER GUARD (continued)

“God bless the gallant lads in blue!
With mighty strength their hearts renew.
Bless every ship and every crew!
Give every man his rightful due!
And bring them all safe through!”

THE VISION SPLENDID

YOU ALSO!

To whom was denied the chance of doing all you would have wished to do. Some of you died by accident, some by disease, some by sheer hardship and overwork. No matter. Duty is duty, wheresoe'er 'tis done. So long as you died on duty you share, full equal with the rest, the gratitude of all our hearts.

And you, to whom it was not given
To die upon the foughten field,—
Yes, you full equally have striven,
For you your lives did yield
As nobly as the men who fell,
There in the blazing mouth of hell.

Not in the wild rush of the fight
God saw it meet for you to die.
Yet he who keeps his armour bright
His Lord doth magnify.
You answered equally The Call,
And he who gives himself gives all.

THE VISION SPLENDID

YOU ALSO! (continued)

Duty is duty, wheresoe'er
'Tis done, and no man can do more
Than, in the testing-time, prepare
To prove him conqueror.
Or here or there—no matter where,
Who dies for Right hath done his share,
And shall the victor's laurel wear.

OUR WOUNDED

Britain, too often, once the struggle ended,
You have forgotten where your duty lay;
Your sons, who with their lives your life defended,
You have left stranded on life's dreary way.

Your promises were all too soon forgotten;
The land was strewn with wreckage of your wars;
The woes by your indifference begotten
You left untended But you bore the
scars;—

Scars deep and ghastly on your reputation,
Smirches and blemishes on your fair fame;
See to it now,—nor sign your abdication!
See to it now,—nor bow our heads with shame!

If one brave broken soul you leave unfriended,
The world will know your own soul's life is dead.
Then shall your hope of dominance be ended;—
Worthless the body whence the soul is fled.

THE VISION SPLENDID

OUR WOUNDED (continued)

Hereby the world shall test your right to headship,
Hereby shall know if you are sound at heart,
Or if your soul is sunken in the dead sleep
Of those who value not "the better part."

PRISONERS OF WAR

And you!—ay, yours indeed is hardest fate,
Imprisoned there, behind the bars of hate,
Victims of low malignity and scorn,
Your sole offence that you are British-born.

Harder than hardest of the camp or field,
To bear in time of stress a virgin shield,—
To hear the distant echoes of the fray,
Yet be debarred one single stroke to essay.

Yet you do serve, who only stand and wait
And bear you bravely, nor in aught abate
Of your high courage, but, with heads erect,
E'en from your jailers still command respect.

You serve the state by bearing you as those
Whom, undeserving, nought can discompose,
You, too, your country's flag can hold on high,
By your high bearing in captivity.

THE VISION SPLENDID

“COME AT ONCE!”

“Wounded shrapnel in the head,
Don’t worry—fine to be in bed.”

“Can’t write much am very well
But coddling still a bit of shell.”

“Slow of healing soon all right.
Sorry gave you such a fright.”

“Longer here than I expected;
Somewhat limp, but not dejected.”

“Not so well bit slack and tired;
Progress slower than desired.”

“Hope to see you soon again.
Rather rotten can’t say when.”

.
“*Come at once!*”—official message.
Hearts sink low at its grim presage.

THE VISION SPLENDID

“COME AT ONCE!” (continued)

Speeding south our hearts outpace us;
Faithless fears well-nigh disgrace us.

Sympathetic faces greet us
He had come half-way to meet us.

He is gone. We follow slowly,
Treasuring a memory holy.

He is gone, yet he is near us;
Maybe he can see and hear us.

Yes, we feel him nearer, dearer;
Tears have washed our souls' eyes clearer.

DE MORTUIS NIL

“Of the dead no ill word speak!”
Full fitly said,—
For the dead—God wot—
Can answer not
To any ill word spread.

But, if our little race
To heights like that can rise,
God surely will no less,
Since His clear comprehending eyes
See all the workings of the soul,
And see it whole, without disguise.
If our small charity can veil
The darker shadows of life's tale,
Shall He do less,
Whose judgments are all righteousness,
Whose justice still is grace?

ONE MOTHER

My Son! My Son!

Would God that I had died for thee!

For my full course is well nigh run,

But thine, in its sweet ecstasy,

Was scarce begun,

Yet now is done;—*yet—now—is—done!*

Would God that I had died for thee,

My Son! My Son!

Was it for this I travailed sore?—

My Son! My Son!

—To see thee ere thy prime undone?

Flesh of my flesh, a man I bore,—

Bone of my bone!—

And now have none;—*and—now—have—none!*

Was it for this I travailed sore?

My Son! My Son!

Yet, Lord, can I deny Thee ought?

—*My Son! My Son!*—

For was it not Thine Only One

Who my dear one's salvation wrought,

THE VISION SPLENDID

ONE MOTHER (continued)

The Cross upon?—

Thine Only One!—*Thine—Only—One!*

I learn the lesson these have taught,—

My Son! Thy Son!

Yea, Lord, for all that He hath done,

I yield to Him my heart distraught,

My life, my soul, my every thought,

From His great Love I can hold naught;—

Thy Son! Thy Son!—

Thine—Only—One!

THE MEETING-PLACE

Though all the world divide us,
Yet, in Thee,—
Spirit of God,—the Paraclete,—
In holy fellowship we meet,
And our souls greet
Each other in communion sweet.

Yea,—if our faith and love be strong enough,
Here we be one,
For time and space are nought
In our communion.

Nor Death himself can part us from our loved;
Time, space, and death are of the earth;
The souls of all who dwell in Thee
Are Thy new birth.

In Thee they find release
From all the bonds of frail humanity,
And Freedom, and The Peace

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE MEETING-PLACE (continued)

Which passeth knowledge,
And security;
And, in that sanctuary sweet,
Their souls' maturity.

SOME BLESSEDS

Blessed are they that have eyes to see.

They shall find God everywhere.

They shall see Him where others see stones.

Blessed are they that have understanding hearts.

To them shall be multiplied Kingdoms of De-
light.

Blessed are they that see visions.

They shall rejoice in the hidden ways of God.

Blessed are the song-ful of soul.

They carry light and joy to shadowed lives.

*Blessed are they who rejoice in the power of
prayer.*

They draw very near to God.

Blessed are they who know the power of Love.

They dwell in God, for God is Love.

THE VISION SPLENDID

SOME BLESSEDS (continued)

Blessed are the dead.

For they are with God.

Blessed are the living.

For they can still serve God.

Blessed are they who rejoice in their children.

To them is revealed the Father-Motherhood of
God.

Blessed are the childless, loving children still.

Theirs shall be a mightier family,
Even as the stars of heaven.

Blessed are the souls kept virgin for mankind.

Unto them shall be given unbounded kingdoms
of great joy.

Blessed are the faithful strong.

They are the right hands of God.

Blessed are they that dwell in peace,—

If they forget not God.

THE VISION SPLENDID

SOME BLESSED (continued)

Blessed are they that fight for the Right.

They shall save their souls,
For God is with them.

Blessed are they whose memories we cherish.

Our thoughts add jewels to their crowns.

*Blessed are they who, through tribulation, have
come to perfect trust in God.*

Theirs is the peace which passeth understand-
ing.

*Blessed are the burdened of heart to whom The
Comforter has come.*

They foretaste the joy of heaven.

Blessed are the souls all bare before God.

He shall clothe them with His Peace and Love.

Blessed is the people whose heart is set on God.

It shall STAND.

THE SACRAMENT OF FOOD!

Each meal should be a sacramental feast,—
A Eucharist each breaking of the bread,
Wherein we meet again our Great High Priest,
And pledge new troth to our exalted Head.

For all we eat doth come of sacrifice,—
Life out of Death,—since all we eat must yield
Life for our living,—and yet, nothing dies,
But in its giving finds its life fulfilled.

The wheat, the plant, the beast, and man, all give
Each of their best, God's purpose to maintain,
And all subserve the end for which all live,
And pass,—to live more worthily again.

AT—ONE—MENT

At odds with Thee,
Through my inconstancy!—
Then is my life
A tragedy of woe,
And voided of delight,—
A grim black night,
Where threatening shadows come and go,
And foes prevail,—
A beggary beyond the pale,
At which my shrinking soul in fear doth quail.
At odds with Thee!—
Ah—that is misery!

At one with Thee!—
Ah, then, in truth no more
Am I alone,
As I was heretofore,
To face the stress of life;
But filled with power
That makes me conqueror in the strife,
Strong to prevail
When foes assail,

THE VISION SPLENDID

AT—ONE—MENT (continued)

Or patient to endure,
And proof against the world's most sweet allure.
At one with Thee—
Is my delivery.

KITCHENER

He stands for ever on the scroll of fame
As one who, by his calm persistence, overcame
All obstacles, and, by his zealous faithfulness,
Built for himself an imperishable name.

He was a man,—
A man above the common run of men,
One of the larger breed,—
A man who at its highest did maintain
Honour's high creed.

Forethought, foresight,—
Indomitable will, and nerve of steel,—
An instinct for success
That did success compel,—
Pre-vision that contingencies assessed,—
Cool courage under stress that nought de-
pressed,—
These were the man,—
Britain at her highest and her best.

THE VISION SPLENDID

KITCHENER (continued)

The forthright glance
Of those deep steadfast eyes of his
Pierced like a sword life's small hypocrisies,
And saw, behind, the graver urgencies.
He nothing left to chance,
Nor ever bowed to adverse circumstance.
The cavillings of smaller men
Disturbed him not.
He laid his course, won through,
And trust begot.

His was a name to conjure with—
Because men trusted him.
He called for men,
And men sprang up in legions to his call,—
Because they trusted him.
His life was lofty; and in full accord
His death. On duty exigent he went,
And on the high tide of accomplishment,
Met there his Over-Lord.

Like Viking bold,
Like one of the Kings of Old,
He passed.
On duty bent,

THE VISION SPLENDID

KITCHENER (continued)

Into the storm he went,
And vanished from men's sight;—
Fit ending for a perfect knight
Whose shield was white,
His honour spotless bright;
His tomb, great ocean's bed,—
Fit resting-place for one
Who ne'er by man was vanquished.

Like a deep sea of unknown strength
Was he. Now in unfathomable depths he lies,
Master, at length, of all the mysteries;
And those grave steadfast eyes of his
Still watch intent his country's destinies.

PROMOTED

In the North Sea Battle, May 31st, 1916,
JOHN TRAVERS CORNWELL,
First-Class Boy, H.M.S. "Chester."

The Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet, in submitting to the Admiralty his Report on the Jutland Bank Battle, includes the following instance of devotion to duty recorded by Sir David Beatty:—

"A report from the Commanding Officer of 'Chester' gives a splendid instance of devotion to duty. Boy (First-Class) John Travers Cornwell, of 'Chester,' was mortally wounded early in the action. He nevertheless remained standing alone at a most exposed post, quietly awaiting orders till the end of the action, with the gun's crew dead and wounded all around him. His age was under 16½ years. I regret that he has since died, but I recommend his case for special recognition in justice to his memory, and as an acknowledgment of the high example set by him."

THE VISION SPLENDID

PROMOTED (continued)

There was his duty to be done,—
And he did it.

No thought of glory to be won;
There was his duty to be done,—
And he did it.

Wounded when scarce the fight begun,
Of all his fellows left not one;
There was his duty to be done,—
And he did it.

Death's fiery hail he did not shun,
Fearless he stood, unmoved, alone,
Beside his eager, useless gun;
There was his duty to be done,—
And he did it.

Britain, be proud of such a son!—
Deathless the fame that he has won.
Only a boy,—but such a one!—
Standing for ever to his gun;
There was his duty to be done,—
And he did it.

THE VISION SPLENDID

PROMOTED (continued)

Let every soul in all the land
Revere his steadfast loyalty.
Britain shall all unconquered stand
While she can breed such sons as he.
His brave, short life was nobly planned
On lines of perfect fealty,
His death fulfilled his KING'S command,
"Aye ready be to come to ME!"
And he did it.

EDITH CAVELL

Dead?

Who?

Not you—for whom the assassin's hand

But opened wide the door to larger life

And Immortality!

You are not dead!—

You live for ever in our hearts and minds,

A perfect woman, brave, and sweet, and true,

Passed, in the gracious fulness of your time,

To nobler work for Him you served so well.

And you still work among us as before,—

And more.—

No sister-nurse in all the world to-day

But bears upon her heart and face

The impress of your soul's high martyrdom;

And we pay each the homage due to you.

All nursing-hands are gentler still—for you!

All nursing-feet are swifter still—for you!

All nursing-hearts are braver still—for you!—

And all our souls more loftily attuned

By our sweet memory of you.

THE VISION SPLENDID

EDITH CAVELL (continued)

But dead—ay, dead, in grimmest truth,
The soul of that poor land
That gave you victim to its savage spleen.
Dead to all sense of right,—
Dead to all sense of shame,—
Dead to mere decency,—
And dead—dead—dead to God
And His Fair Christ.
The pity!—oh, the pity!—that a land
Which once bore men
Should fall so low!

Punishment?

What punishment could fit so foul a crime?
No punishment devisable of man were adequate.
As thou forgavest, we can do no less.
God saw it all.
In His just balances it lies,
The crowning weight of their vast infamies.
In His own time, in His own way,
For this—and all—we wait His Reckoning-Day.

THE VISION SPLENDID

GOOD ONLY

If this be good it shall abide.

If not,—best gone.

Of that which stands not in His sight

We will have none.

THE VISION SPLENDID

GERMANIA!

And the Lord said: "*Where is thy brother?*"

And he said, "*I know not. Am I my
brother's keeper?*"

And the Lord said: "*What hast thou done?
The voice of thy brother's
blood crieth unto Me from
the ground.*"

Henceforth for years to come,
And long as memory remains,
Your very name shall bear an evil fame,—
Shall be a hissing and a byword and a scorn,—
A synonym for deep-planned treacheries,
For outrage of all common human rights,
For murderous venom, mad, insensate rage,
And coldly-calculated frightfulness,
Which missed its aim but brands you, hence for
ever,
With the mark of Cain.

THE VISION SPLENDID

GERMANIA (continued)

Men reap what they have sown;—
That is the inviolable law.
You have sown hatreds; hatreds you shall reap,
And utter detestation of right-minded men.
Your masters, hanged like Haman,
Were too lightly sped.
And you, the common herd,
Who carried out like cattle their fell will,—
You shared the evil; you rejoiced in it;
You would have shared the plunder;
You the punishment must share.
So long as memory remains,
You bear the foul black stains.
And memories of deeds like yours
Are deep, deep memories, and long,—
Deeper than graves, and longer than men's lives.

Yet even you—returned to saner mind,
Your foul crimes purged, and reparation made,
May in Time's fulness be received again
Among the nations;
But—not—yet,—nor ever as before.
What man henceforth can trust you?
You have lost

THE VISION SPLENDID

GERMANIA (continued)

Your standing in the courts of honour and of
truth.

Outcast you are, outcast you must remain,
Until you prove your right to stand again
In the clean company of honourable men.

A knightly enemy, one fair in fight,—
The fighting done, we greet again as friend
And bear no malice. But a foe who knows
No law of God or man but his necessity,
Whose word is wind, whose treaties—paper
spoiled,

His pledges—cover for his treacheries,
His acts—the rootings of a hog in mire;—
His hand no honest man can take again
Until he cleanse it of the accursed stain.

RIGHT AND RIGHTS

If every man did right,
No man would have to fight
For his own rights 'mid all the other wrongs
 and rights of life;
His rights would be his right,
And no man then would fight
For that which was his own 'mid all the other
 rights of life.
If only—only—only—
Every man did right,
No more would life be strife,
But just one long, bright, infinite,
Pure vista of delight,—
If only—only—only—
Every man did right.

THE FATHER-MOTHERHOOD

Father *and* Mother, Thou
In Thy full being art,—
Justice with mercy intertwined,
Judgment exact with Love combined,
Neither complete apart.

And so, we know that when
Our service weak and vain,
The Father-Justice would condemn,
The Mother-Love Thy wrath will stem,
And our reprieval gain.

GOD-SENSE!

God grant you,
In the common ways of life,
Good common-sense!—
And in the larger things,
Uncommon sense!—
And, in the greatest things of all,
His own God-sense!—

God-sense of what is right and fit,
That so, in every circumstance
Of life or death, you may acquit
Yourself as He deems well,—
In all make good deliverance,
In all without offence excel,
In all add glory to His name,
And His estate enhance.

DEBTOR AND CREDITOR AM I

All who have lived and gone,
 Since Time began,—
And all that they have ever done,
 Since Time began,—
Their every thought, and word, and deed
Has been unconsciously a seed,
Bringing its influence to bear
Upon my mind and character.
Yea, each and all, in their degree,
Have had their part in making ME,—
And YOU,—
Just simple you, and simple me.

And equally—
 Till Time shall end,
 And on through all eter-
 nity,—

In its degree,
Each thought and word and deed of mine
Or makes or mars God's fair design.
Not one but has its due effect,
In ways by me all unsuspect,

THE VISION SPLENDID

DEBTOR AND CREDITOR AM I (continued)

On all who shall come after me.
No tiniest ripple on the sea
But tells on its immensity.

Here as I stand—a simple man—
I am Time's heir

Since Time began.

And more,—in my degree, Progenitor
Of all that Time may have in store;—
Debtor and Creditor in one
Of all that has been, shall be, done.
I am at once effect and cause
Of all that is to be or was.
Enough, in truth, to make one pause
In awe-struck wonder at the laws
Which suffer no least thing to fail
In carrying on the wondrous tale.

In God's economy there is
No end to once-born energies.
The very leaf that falls and dies
Lives on again in other guise;
And no man for himself alone
Can live, or his account disown.

THE VISION SPLENDID

DEBTOR AND CREDITOR AM I (continued)

However small, for good or ill,
He doth Life's purposes fulfil,
And graves upon the deathless scroll
The endless record of his soul.
God's primal word was "*Let there be!*"
And therewith—Life's eternity.

INSPIRATION—PERSPIRATION

Inspiration is good, but with it alone
Life's prizes are not to be won;
Perspiration you'll need if you would succeed
And get the world's work well done.

THE VISION SPLENDID

IN THE BEGINNING

In the Beginning,
When as yet nought was,—
Earth without form and void,—
Darkness impenetrate upon the deeps,—
Still one the upper and the nether floods,—
Thou, Spirit of God, didst move
Upon the waters' face,
Silent, majestic, where was none to see.
And in those vast infinities
Of silence and of space,
Didst ponder what should be.
And of Thy wondrous pondering
Came—Earth.

And, through the ages since,
Unseen and silent, Thou hast watched
Earth's doings and undoings;
—Hast seen the nations rise
To utmost dominance,
Filling the earth with wonder and with awe
Of their magnificence;
And Thou hast seen them fall

THE VISION SPLENDID

IN THE BEGINNING (continued)

To nought and less than nought,—
To nothing but a name
And that accursed.

The nations come, the nations go;
But, in the everness of Thine eternity,
They are no more than shadows
Flitting across earth's face,
Which Thou didst make so fair,
And dulling for a little space
Its radiance rare.

And ever, when, in his sore need,
Man turned to Thee,
Thy help was given unstintedly and free.
And when, in high estate again,
He turned and flouted Thee,
Thou, The Omnipotent, his crown
Didst take, and put him down
Into the dust from whence he came,
And left him but a name.

But, through it all we see,
Though dimly, since Thy ways are mystery,
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THE VISION SPLENDID

IN THE BEGINNING (continued)

Thy Will, through all the fret and strife,
Towards fuller, larger, nobler life.

And still, in silent majesty,
Unheard, unseen, Thou dwellest above
The wild world-welter of these later days,
Watching, watching, watching man deface
Thine image, and Thy love abase,—
A chaos darker than that primal one,
For now Thy will is known, but is not
done.

Yet still we hold the faith
That Thou, who conqueredst Death,
Will, of Thy later brooding, and man's strife,
Bring forth a nobler life.
As of Thy former came
So fair an earth,
So, of this later birth,
In Thy good time, shall come
A world swept clean, by Thy consuming flame,
Of shame and all that makes for shame,
And worthy henceforth of Thy name.

A LITTLE WORD

I spoke a word,
And no one heard;
I wrote a word,
And no one cared,
Or seemed to heed;
But after half a score of years
It blossomed in a fragrant deed.

Preachers and teachers all are we,—
Sowers of seeds unconsciously.
Our hearers are beyond our ken,
Yet all we give may come again
With usury of joy or pain.
We never know
To what one little word may grow.
See to it then that all your seeds
Be such as bring forth noble deeds.

THE VISION SPLENDID

SHOW PITY, LORD!

Cast out the sword,
Break it in twain,
 Show pity, Lord!
Our pride is slain.

Our pride is slain,
We are full sore,
 Show pity, Lord!
We can no more.

We can no more
Thy wrath withstand,
 Show pity, Lord!
Stretch out Thy Hand!

Stretch out Thy Hand!
Our might is vain.
 Show pity, Lord!
Lift us again!

THE VISION SPLENDID

SHOW PITY, LORD! (continued)

Lift us again!

Thine is the power,

 Show pity, Lord!

In this dark hour!

Thine is the Kingdom

 Thine the power!

The Greatness and the Glory Thine!

O rise and shine,

In this dark hour,

And fill all life

With Light divine!

SQUARING UP

Now all ye nations of the Pact, when once the
fight is won,

See to it that your mighty work is well and truly
done.

The millions of your wounded, and the myriads
of your dead,

Claim as their guerdon of reward a peace full
perfected.

Enforce a peace and make secure,—a peace that
shall stand sure;

Safeguard it well lest once again this horror ye
endure;

Bind all the peoples in a bond that nought can
break or mar,

And rid the world for ever of this foul red curse
of war.

And the vanquished,—the provokers of this dread
catastrophe!—

They must bear the weighty burden of their self-
made agony;

THE VISION SPLENDID

SQUARING UP (continued)

Yet in righteousness and justice be the punishment
imposed,—

God grant they find their souls again before The
Books be closed!

THE PURGE OF THE FLAME

Bound hand and foot, the blameless three
Were flung into the seven-fold flame,
But, to them in extremity,
The Son of God for solace came,
And walked with them, and talked with them;
And lo—the bound were free!

For that fierce flame, that overcame
The mighty men that they were slain,
Burned off the bonds of tyranny,
And gave the conscientious three
God's liberty.

So be it with us, Lord!—May this
Fierce flame of untold sacrifice
Burn off our bonds, and set us free
For nobler service unto Thee,
And wider ministry!

THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE

Ay,—Truth in very truth would set us free;
But Life is shackled, hand and foot, with lies,
And all the fortresses of Knavery
Are built and buttressed with foul perjuries.

If Truth's white light could pierce Life's clouded
 sky,
And let men see things as they truly are,
Full half the rulers of the world would lie
Prisoners in chains before Life's Judgment-Bar.

Fathers of Lies, and High Diplomacies,
Earth groans beneath the burden of your crimes!
Come Truth, and therewith Peace, and swift re-
 lease,
And certitude of sweeter, nobler times!

THERE IS NO DEATH

There is no death.—

They only truly live

Who pass into the life beyond, and see

This earth is but a school preparative

For larger ministry.

We call them “dead,”—

But they look back and smile

At our dead living in the bonds of flesh,

And do rejoice that, in so short a while,

Our souls will slip the leash.

There is no death

To those whose hearts are set

On higher things than this life doth afford;

How shall their passing leave one least regret,

Who go to join their Lord?

THE LEAVES OF THE GOLDEN BOOK

Thick as leaves on Vallombrosa
Lie the leaves of The Golden Book,
Scattered wide throughout the land,
Everywhere, on every hand,
Telling how our men forsook
Their little all, at Duty's call,
And high things undertook.

I see them in the narrow streets,
Each window shrines a name;
And my heart greets with quickened beat
These diplomas of fame.

Out in the quiet country lanes,
Among the waving trees,
They peep out from the leaded panes
Of old-world villages.

Here, two have gone,—here, three,—once,
four!—

Four from one family!
My heart beat high and yet was sore,

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE LEAVES OF THE GOLDEN BOOK (continued)

For what if they should come no more?—
I bowed before that humble door,—
Then went on weightily
For—what high honour to their name!—
Four Great-Hearts, gone to face
Woundings and death, with but one aim,—
The welfare of their race!

And if they come no more!—ah then,
Our loss is sore indeed.
But their promotion is all gain;
And so—to each—"God Speed!"

God will gather all these scattered
Leaves into His Golden Book,
Torn and crumpled, soiled and battered,
He will heal them with a look.
Not one soul of them has perished;
No man ever yet forsook
Wife, and home, and all he cherished,
And God's purpose undertook,
But he met his full reward
In the "Well Done" of his Lord.

THE VISION SPLENDID

AND THOU?

*"For thee,—earth's fetters worn;
For thee,—the life forlorn;
For thee,—the crown of thorn;
For thee,—the death of scorn;
All this,—and that last agony,
I bore for thee.
What hast thou done for Me?"*

Lord, to Thy name
I build a noble fane,
Chaste and replete
With all things fair and meet
Thy worship to maintain,
And dowered it complete
With every requisite.

"Thou hadst thy reward!"

Nay but,—Lord! Lord!
"Thou hadst thy reward!"

"And thou?"

Lord, I bring nought.
In humble ways I sought

THE VISION SPLENDID

AND THOU? (continued)

To bring to dull grey days
Some gleam of light,
Some touch of grace,
Some lifting of the night.
I strove to teach Thy love,
But no success my work did bless.
Dear Lord, forgive my emptiness!

"Thou hast well done,

My faithful one.

I measure worth by effort, not success.

Not what thou didst, but what thy striving meant

Is my just gauge of thine accomplishment.

Come—enter in, and share my happiness!"

YESTERDAY—TO-DAY—TO-MORROW.

"Yesterday is dead. . . . Forget it!
To-morrow does not exist. . . . Don't worry!
To-day is here. . . . Use it!"

D. B.

Yesterday dead?

Nay then! Its joyous memories
Live on and on, and ever brighter grow.
And all its wounds and wrinkles shall be filmed
With tenderest lichen-growth of Time,
Healing the sores and hiding e'en the scars;
For nothing dies,—not even our yesterdays.

To-morrow non-existent?

Ay!—but To-morrow holds in trust
Our hope's fruition.
No To-morrow!—Then, indeed,
Would Hope lie dead
And Faith and Love be vanquishèd.
Hope of The Great To-morrow
Keeps our heart's compass to its pole.
We look indeed for morrows that shall far

THE VISION SPLENDID

YESTERDAY — TO-DAY — TO-MORROW (continued)

Outweigh the sorrows that now are;
In that sweet hope we live,
In that sure faith wax strong.
To-morrow truly comes apace,—
Sure-footed, swift, with smiling face,—
With smiling face comes swift to meet us,—
Hands outstretched with joy to greet us,—
Hands outstretched and princely-laden
With the gifts of God.
To-morrow is not, but shall be,
Till both IS and IS TO BE
Meet in God's Eternity.

To-day is here! Use it!
Yes, truly!—here is no dispute.
For Life, in ultimate and veriest truth,
Is bounded by a moment's span.
The past is past,—the future not yet born.
E'en as you read this word . . . 'tis gone!
'Twas read. It passed into the past, became a
memory.
And, in the terms of His Infinity,
Man's life is like that fleeting moment,—
Gone soon as come.

THE VISION SPLENDID

YESTERDAY — TO-DAY — TO-MORROW (continued)

But His Eternity lasts on and on and on,
And by His grace we share it, and we too last on.
This pulse at any beat may stop;
Man can be certain but of each short moment
As it comes. His next may be the other side the
vail.

—A solemn thought, and only bearable in this sure
hope,—

Whatever is, the best is still to come;
And He who gives gives knowingly,
And suits His gifts to our necessities.

S. ANTHONY AND COBBLER JOHN

Anthony the Monk

Dwelt in the desert sands, alone with God,
Beyond remotest ken of other men,
And sought, by strictest due to every rite,
With prayers and fastings of the eremite,
To perfect life and make his soul more white.

To Anthony the Monk

There came, upon the still noon air, a voice,
*"Saintly and pure thy life, my Anthony,
And in it my sore heart doth much rejoice.
Yet, there in Alexandria, lives one
More saintly still than thou,—old Cobbler John."*
"Lord—how?"

"Nay—that I leave to thee, my son."

So Anthony the Monk

Took staff and gourd, and toiled across the waste
To far-off Alexandria in haste;
And found the house, and said to Cobbler John,—
"The fragrance of your saintliness is blown
To heaven itself. I pray you make it known,—

THE VISION SPLENDID

S. ANTHONY AND COBBLER JOHN (continued)

What do you then beyond all other men,
That your sweet virtue has such great renown?"

"Nay then," said Cobbler John,
Nor slacked one instant from his arduous toil,
"I know of nought that should to God be
known

Unless, indeed," he said, perplexedly,
"That every shoe I cobble is to me Christ's own.
To me it is, you see. And every one
Is done my best for Him alone."

Then Anthony the Monk
Bowed his grey head, and very humbly said,—
"I strove to make a saint of Anthony.
You find the Christ in every man you see.
Your way is best and you the more are blest."
He knelt and kissed the cobbler's grimy fist,
And went,—but went not back into the waste.

PAUL AND AGRIPPA

Pale from his prison,
Before me stood the Jew,
A man of humblest aspect,
Shrunk, and bowed,
Blinking as one new risen,
And half dazed,
Yet unabashed, uncowed
By all his sufferings.
And, as I gazed, I knew
Here was no common Jew.
For, close beside him, by none other seen,
(Festus saw nought, nor did Bernice, the
Queen,)
Stood one of mien transcendent,—
Gracious, and wonderful, and stern,
With eyes resplendent,—
Eyes which all knowledge held,—
Knowledge of all things past, all things to
come;—
All I had done and all that I should do,
That other knew.
And in His presence, I forgot the Jew.

THE VISION SPLENDID

PAUL AND AGRIPPA (continued)

And when the pale Jew spoke
It was *His* voice I heard;
It was *His* soul looked at me
Through the pale Jew's eyes.
Boldly he spoke and wondrous wise,
My heart went out to him;
Almost, indeed, he did persuade me to become
A Christian like himself.
And when I said as much, he flamed,—
“I would not only thou but all who hear me
Were this day as I, save for these bonds.”
And as he spoke, the Jew
Was like a blazing lamp,
And He who stood beside him
Shone like the noonday sun.
No wrong was here. I told them so.
But, since the Jew had claimed his right,
To Cæsar he must go.
And I was sad for him,
For such appeal to such an one
Meant death.

KINSFOLK

And you from the Dominions, from the Lands
beyond the Seas,
You have given us without stinting, of your lives,
your energies;
By the blood we shed together we are kin as ne'er
before,
You have knit your hearts to our hearts hence-
forth for ever more.

You have borne with us the burden of the heat,
the cold, the fray;
We are bound by blood of sacrifice that nought
can e'er repay.
Now share the mighty heritage for which akin we
strove,—
The end of strife, the nobler life, the Empery of
Love!

THE CHILDREN

The children, Lord, the children!—
Not for ourselves we pray,
But for these little ones, whose feet
Are tender to the way.

For we have learned our lessons
Of Love, and Hope, and Trust;
But they have still to learn them,
'Mid the turmoil and the dust.

Thy hand was always stretched, Lord,
To lift us when we fell;
We leave them to thy Father-love
That doeth all things well.

When the wind and the rain beat on them
O hap them in Thy breast,
When their feet grow worn with ways forlorn
Lift them up and give them rest.

THE VISION SPLENDID

THE CHILDREN (continued)

High on Thy breast, Lord, bear them,
Above the flints and mire.
The way is long, the wind is strong,
But Love's arms never tire.

We have no wealth to leave them,
They must tread the paths we trod;
But all is well if but they dwell
In the Fatherhood of God.

And whatever else they learn, Lord,
May they learn this first of all,—
That the great heart of their Father
Will answer every call.

BE STRONG!

Stronger the soul which says,—

“This is with purpose sent for my ennoblement,”—

And on its knees in prayer doth bravely bear
Its overweight of care,
Than one which in its agony doth pray
That its affliction may be taken away.

God loves not to afflict,
Yet sees at times the need,
And firmly, tenderly, doth lead
Our feet, by ways more strict,
By straitened ways and clouded days
Up to the shining crest,
Where the redeemed soul
Looks back upon the whole
Of those past days, and says,—
“His way, in truth, was best.”

Pain is at times God’s minister,
And suffering glorified,
Since, sinless, for the sons of men,
The Christ was crucified.

TO WIN THE WORLD

Would you win all the world for Christ?—
One way there is and only one;—
You must live Christ from day to day,
And see His Will be done.

But who lives Christ must tread His way,
Leave self and all the world behind,
Press ever up and on, and serve
His kind with single mind.

No easy way,—rough-strewn with stones,
And wearisome, the path He trod.
But His way is the only way
That leads man back to God.

And lonesome oft, and often dark
With shame, and outcastry, and scorn,
And, at the end, perchance a cross,—
And many a crown of thorn.

THE VISION SPLENDID

TO WIN THE WORLD (continued)

But His lone cross and crown of thorn
Endure when crowns and empires fall.
The might of His undying love
In dying conquered all.

Only by treading, in His steps,
The all-compelling ways of Love
Shall earth be won, and man made one
With that Great Love above.

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